

A Tournament Director's Quick Guide To USA Beach Volleyball Rules

FACILITIES and EQUIPMENT

- **Court (Rule 1.1 & 1.3):** is 8m (26'3") x 16m (52'6"). There is NO centerline. Measure to outside of the 5cm (2") wide lines. Square to 37'1" short diagonal.
- **Net (Rule 2):** 27'10 1/2" (8.5m) long. Height at center: Women 7'4 1/8" (2.24m); Men 7'11 5/8" (2.43 m) Note: the height of the net may be varied for specific age groups. *Reference Rule 2.1.*
 - **Ball (Rule 3):** Standard ball will be used for all divisions except for U12. U12 will have the option to play with a lighter playable ball if available.
 - **Antennas (Rule 2.4):** Must be lined up with the sideline and placed on opposite sides of the net.

TEAMS

- **COMPOSITION (Rule 4.1):** Two players of the same gender. NO substitutes. EITHER player may request a timeout or may speak with the referee.
- **UNIFORMS (Rule 4.3):** consist of shorts/tops or bathing suit. Numerals 1 and 2 are the accepted uniform numbers, but are not required. A hat is allowed. Cold weather gear is allowed.

COACHES/COACHING (Rule 4.1.4)

- Permitted under specified guidelines and must be identified as such. Must dress professionally.
- Coaches observe from the player box or courts side where they do not interfere with play, address players only during intervals and may suggest a time out.
- Coaches may not address the official or attempt to influence their decisions at any time.
- Coaches must leave the playing court at the start of the official timed warm up. *Reference Match Protocol section, Warm-Up Session, described below.*
- Coaches are subject to sanction for delay of the match or inappropriate behavior.

MATCH PROTOCOL

- **MATCH PLAY (Rule 6.3):** best-of-three sets played to 21, 21, 15 (only in the case of a 1-1 tie). Rally scoring. No cap. Win by two points.
 - **WARM-UP SESSION (Rule 7.2):** total 10 minutes (all shared, no coaches allowed): This official timed warm-up is to begin 10 minutes prior to the start of the match. Segmented: 3 min. informal, coin toss, 5 min. formal.
During the official timed warm-up, the four players have unlimited access to the entire court. Once the official timed warm-up begins, coaches must leave the court. At Tournament Director's discretion the warm-up can be minimized to 5 minutes.
- **CAPTAIN (Rule 5.1):** must be designated prior to the match, will represent the team at the coin toss and signs the score sheet before and after the match.
- **COIN TOSS (Rule 7.1):** *PRE-MATCH:* will commence approximately 1 minute prior to the 5 minutes of formal warm-up time. The winner of the coin toss (as performed by the referee) will choose one of the following: **Serve OR Receive OR Side**. The opponent will quickly choose among the remaining options. Both teams declare their serving order. *INTERVAL BETWEEN SETS 1 and 2:* the loser of the pre-match coin toss will have the choice (no coin toss is performed) of **Serve OR Receive OR Side**. The opponent will quickly choose among the remaining options. *INTERVAL BETWEEN SETS 2 and 3,* the 1st referee carries out a new coin toss.
- **MATCH START (Protocol):** teams will enter the court from the end line that corresponds with the team bench. At the referee's request (whistle and hand signal), teams will proceed to the net for a handshake.

- **PLAYERS' POSITION (Rule 7.4 – 7.6):** There are no determined positions of the court. There are no positional faults. Service order must be maintained throughout the set (as determined by the captain). *Reference Rule 7.3 for regulations regarding a service order fault.*
- **TIME-OUTS (Rule 15.4):** Each team is entitled to a maximum of one time-out per set. A regular set interruption; TOs are administered in the following manner:
 :15 seconds - time allotted for teams to move from the playing court to their designated team box.
 :30 seconds - length of the official time-out (immediately followed by a warning whistle).
 :15 seconds - time allotted for teams to return to play.
*Most USA Volleyball play also employs the additional 30-second **Technical Time-Out** when, in sets 1 and 2, the sum of points scored by the teams equals 21 points. **Technical Time-out is optional and at the Tournament Director's discretion.***
- **COURT SWITCHES and INTERVALS (Rule 18 – 18.2):** occur every 7 points played in sets 1 and 2 (non-deciding sets) and every 5 points played in set 3 (deciding set). These switches must be made immediately and without delay. *The interval between each set lasts 1 minute.*
 - **INJURY (Rule 17.1):** An injured player is given a maximum of 5 minutes recovery time one time a match.
 - **MATCH END (Rule 5.1.3):** the referee(s), line judges, and all players shake hands at the stand of the 1st referee. Both captains then sign the score sheet.
 - **DISPUTES (Rule 5.1.2):** While the ball is out of play, either player may speak to the referees. Players have the option to ask for explanation of or to protest the application or interpretation of the rules. Referee judgment decisions cannot be protested. **Coaches are NOT allowed to address officials at any time.**
 - **MISCONDUCT and SANCTIONS (RULE 20):** Yellow Cards = Warnings, Red Cards = Penalties.
 - **REFEREE (Rule 22.1) –** Must be stationed at the post with the second referee set up across at the other post.

PLAYING ACTIONS AND FAULTS

- **Screening (Rule 12.5):** Serving team may not impede receiving team's view of the server and the ball.
 - **Delay (Rule 16.1):** The routine time between rallies is no more than 12 seconds. The routine time between court switches is no more than 30 seconds.
- **Blocks (Rule 14.4):** The block contact counts as the first team contact. Either player may make the 2nd team contact.
 - **Tipping (Rule 13.2.3):** "Open hand" tipping is considered an illegal contact. To avoid this type of illegal contact the fingers must be "rigid and together" or knuckles must be used.
 - **Plane of the Net (Rule 13.1.3 & 14.3):** Players may only contact the ball within their own playing space. Blockers may only contact a ball in the opponent's space after the opponent's attack hit (Rule 15.1).
 - **Ball under the Net (Rule 8.4.5):** Players may contact any part of the ball until it has passed completely through the plane below the net.
 - **Simultaneous Contact by Teammates (Rule 9.1.1):** if two teammates touch the ball simultaneously this counts as TWO team contacts. Either player may make the 3rd and final team contact.
- **Net (USAV Junior Beach Tour Modified Rule):** Contact with the net by a player is a fault. Incidental contact of the hair is never a fault.
 - **Centerline Encroachment:** There is NO centerline (Rule 1.3.2 & 11.2.1); thus, players may make contact with the opponent's court provided there is no interference with play.
 - **Interference (Rule 11.4.3):** A player who interferes with the opponents' play must be called for the fault. *NOTE: contact between opponents does not always constitute interference, interference can occur without physical contact.*
- **Ball Marks (Rule 8.3):** The ball is "IN" if it physically touches the line.

• **Hand Setting - Plays Involving Finger Action (Rule 9.2.3.2):**

Plays involving finger action require special attention. If the play is defensive and reactive in nature, as in the case of a hard-driven ball, momentarily held or double-contacted balls are not considered faults. Furthermore, this may apply to the second touch of a team if the block contact was slight and the ball is still a hard-driven attack, or to the defensive action (team first contact) after a ball has been blocked. If the player decides/intends to employ finger action, as in the case of off-speed attack defense or setting, the action must be “clean.”

- **Held Balls (Rule 9.2.2):** the player does not hit the ball, a contact that visibly pauses in the hands, is contacted too long a time, or is redirected.
- **Double Contact (Rule 9.3.4):** Contacts on the ball that are clearly distinct and separate. *NOTE: Spin is not a fault. Spin may indicate that a fault has occurred.*
- **Serve Receive (Rule 9):** SERVED balls are declared “not hard-driven.” It is legal to receive serve open-handed, however, strict hand setting judgment applies.
- **Execution of the Service (Rule 12.4):** If the ball, after having been tossed or released by the server, lands without being touched or caught by the server, it is considered as a service. No further service attempt will be permitted.

Refer to the USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations rulebook for all rules governing beach volleyball doubles.

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